

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP  
MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY**

**Topic: Cultivating the Presence of God Text: Psalm 84**  
**Teacher: Gladys Osofisan Date: May 26, 2021**

**Introduction:** We started 2021 with a 21 day fasting and prayer challenge. If you participated in that, what is the one thing about you that changed as a result of that?

I believe that most Christians would say that they would like to have more of God's presence in their lives rather than less. We were designed to have a close relationship with God. In a general sense, anyone who has accepted Him as their Savior has God with them. However, this initial act of faith does not guarantee a strong awareness of His presence, it's not automatic. An awareness of the presence of God must be cultivated.

**What's the problem?** Sometimes, it feels like we've become too familiar with God's presence to the point we forget He is 'there' and why He's 'there'.

*Jeremiah 29:13 - "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."*

**God's Omnipresence and His Manifest Presence**

God's omnipresence explains how He is everywhere at the same time, while His manifest presence is His presence made manifest. The omnipresence of God can exist without our knowledge, but the manifest presence of the Lord cannot, because the point of the manifest presence of the Lord is to awaken our awareness of Him to reality as described by Him. To understand this point, let's consider the following example:

**David: Psalm 71:20-21 -** *Make haste, O God, to deliver me! O LORD, make haste to help me! 2 Let them be put to shame and confusion who seek my life! Let them be turned back and brought to dishonor who delight in my hurt!*

**Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego:**

*Daniel 3:24-25 24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." 25 He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."*

**Benefits of His Presence**

**Wisdom - Proverbs 2:1-2 -** *If you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, 2 making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding;*

**What does the Bible say about wisdom, knowledge and understanding?**

*Proverbs 2:6 - To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are His. ... For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding.*

*Proverbs 3:18 - Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold.*

**Peace -** *Philippians 4:7 - 7 And the peace of God, [Eph. 3:19] which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Isaiah 26:3 - You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.*

I personally know that through some of the greatest challenges in my life, pain, hurt, frustration, just trying to figure things out and fear. The peace of God is the one thing that keeps me sane and keeps working for me all the time. I realize I can either be stressed out to the point of health issues, or I can practice the presence of God and be kept in 'perfect' peace.

## **How to cultivate the Presence of God.**

### **1. Become more aware of God's presence by creating space.**

*Mark 1:35* - *And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.*

Without quieting your soul, you won't be able to become more conscious of His presence. "Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life," - Dallas Willard. To hear God clearly, you'll need time and space. God is left in the background because we are all on the move, going from task to task with earbuds in, email open, television blasting, and social media buzzing. What made it so solitary? He was simply eliminating obstacles so that he could concentrate on God. At least once a day, if not more, you and I can do the same. Then we'll have to do it for an extended period of time. These are the moments when we can clearly hear and feel God.

### **2. Become more aware of God's presence by obeying His Word.**

*John 14:21* - *Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and see manifest myself to him.*"

God makes Himself known and shows His existence to all who want to follow His word. Jesus said "Those who follow my commands and obey them are the ones who love me," My Father would love them because they love me. And I will love them all and reveal myself to them individually." The word "reveal" literally means "to show up in person!" Isn't that amazing? Since obedience expresses love for God, God manifests Himself to those who are willing to obey. In this way, God is similar to you and me. Those who love Him are attracted to Him.

### **3. Become more aware of God's presence by talking to Him.**

*1 Thess 5: 17* - *pray without ceasing*

The Practice of the Presence of God, by Brother Lawrence explains this perfectly. He talked about how to turn our conversations we have with ourselves into a conversation with God. This, of course, is prayer. The book is the best explanation of what Paul encouraged all believers to do in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "...pray without ceasing." When we do that, it brings Him into our lives like nothing else can. You can literally talk to Him about everything that is going on all the time. As you get better and better at this, you begin to hear Him speak back to you. And this, my friends, is what you were created for.

So rather than you gettin' up praying for an hour a day and then you're not thinking/conscious of God for the rest of the time; practicing the presence of God is - I want to talk to him throughout the day, I want to listen to him throughout the day, I want to be conscious of him all the day. See, that's his presence and I pray that you will have a heightened sense of His presence and have a consciousness of him all day from now on.